

Gentlemen:

This is in response to your inquiry for input on Canadian interaction with the American fleet.

I have been involved in the Albacore Troll fishery forty-five years. I feel fortunate to have been able to vest myself exclusively in this fishery for all these years and have been successful enough that I now own three albacore vessels. These vessels are responsible for sustaining thirteen American families from income from which is, again, derived exclusively from the albacore fishery. The larger part of this income has come from fishing within the U.S. EEZ where we now interact with the Canadian fleet.

Years ago I fished alongside our Canadian counterparts off the coast of the U.S. and Canada. In the 1960's and 70's there was no EEZ. The fleets were small and there was no perceived competition. This situation has evolved to what I see today- large numbers of boats fishing very competitively for limited resources.

It is difficult to quantify the impact on the U.S. fleet as a result of the Canadian presence in the U.S. zone.

Aggressive behavior is definitely present: I have had close calls with Canadian vessels (which unfortunately I did not document). However, the bottom line of the Canadian presence in the U.S. zone is that there are 110 more boats working in a limited area for a finite resource. One result is that I, as well as the group of vessels that I work with will not transit to an area that we receive reports is being worked by Canadian vessels. From experience, we are aware that those areas are most likely fully exploited. I will spend unproductive time in transit to other areas that look to have potential. I have been working in productive areas which have been "discovered" by Canadian boats. In an effort to maintain productivity, I have felt forced to relocate from those particular area. These areas that I end up working tend to be on the southern end of the grounds, farther away from the Canadian border, and farther away from my homeport, ie; more time in transit .

I was in attendance at the December meeting of the Canadian and U.S. delegations. I was incensed to hear the Canadian delegate refer to the reports of fleet interaction as "hearsay". I find it disturbing that the American fleet is being asked to produce documented "proof" that we are being impacted. My forty years of experience tells me that I am being impacted. I daresay that as a result of my continuous participation over the years in the albacore fishery that I have a good perspective on the development of this extensive Canadian fleet and the impact that it has had on the American fleets production. I was not aware that I needed to be documenting interaction with the Canadian fleet. I believe that a fair question to ask is- should there be a burden of proof on the U.S. fleet when the question involves the U.S. fleets ability to earn income from its own EEZ? I hope that our representatives give credence to the American fleets input-

documented or not. In the future I will most definitely document departure from productive areas, unproductive time in transit to in an effort to locate new areas, and instances of "aggressive behavior".

If you will allow me to voice comment on other concerns as to this treaty;

I am taken aback that, at this point there are a number of Canadians that are apparently dependent on

the Albacore fishery inside the U.S. EEZ to derive their livelihood. A lot of this dependancy comes as a result of overcapitalization of Canadian fisheries. Creating a new fishery for displaced Canadian fishing capacity was NEVER the intent of this treaty. To add insult to injury there are Canadian permit holders and businesses that are trading the rights to fish in the U.S. EEZ. It seems incredible to me that people are able to enrich themselves- especially at the expense of U.S. fishermen.

Thank you for seeking our input.

Respectfully,

Paul Hill

F/V Betty H

F/V Dalena

F/V Constitution